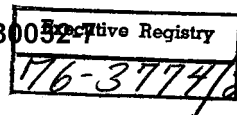


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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY BOARD

1 November 1976

The Honorable George Bush
Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear George:

The Board shares the deep concern expressed in your letter to me of 22 October 1976 regarding the William Beecher article on the competitive analysis experiment published in the Boston Globe and the Washington Star on 20 October.

To the extent that there is a potential for additional disclosures of a more substantive -- and thus more damaging -- nature, I agree, as we discussed when we last talked, that special importance attaches to your effort to identify the source(s) of the leak. I also agree that this task may be made somewhat easier in that Beecher's article contains data so specialized that its understanding must have been limited to the team itself and to a handful of others who have been actively involved in the experiment.

We also share your apprehension that further leaks may jeopardize the ultimate utility of the experiment by mischaracterizing its nature and by distorting its objectives. For this as well as other reasons (including the possibility that you might decide to take a public initiative if, for example, the Beecher story is followed up), it is essential that there be a clear and unambiguous understanding as to the purposes of the experiment in competitive analysis.

I believe we should develop this understanding based on the ground rules jointly arrived at by the Board's NIE Evaluation Committee and your Deputy for National Intelligence Officers, which are reflected in my letter to you of 8 June 1976. The more relevant parts of this letter state:

The purpose of the experiment is to generate, from the fragmentary evidence which is available, possible alternative

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descriptions, explanations and judgments of Soviet activities, capabilities and objectives.

(Discussions between competitive teams and eventually with the NFIB) will not -- repeat not -- be aimed at striking compromises or reaching consensus judgments. Their purpose, instead, will be to insure that both (teams) are, having been motivated to construct alternatives, compelled to defend their assertions and their use of evidence and analysis before peers equally well versed in the technical details of their respective subjects.

There has been no intention that the experiment force a "worst-case" view of Soviet objectives. Nor did the NIE Evaluation Committee, when it suggested for your staff's consideration a number of people it believed qualified, intend thereby to encourage a selection of team members whose efforts would be predictable irrespective of the evidence made available for their analysis. (Of the seven individuals identified in Beecher's article, I believe that only two originated as Committee suggestions.) Indeed, the essence of the experiment's purpose was reflected most recently in a status report of 4 October 1976 from Mr. Lehman, which reiterates that:

The mandate of the three "B" teams was to take an independent look at Soviet strategic objectives...to determine whether Soviet goals are in fact more ambitious...and thus, by implication, present a more serious threat to US security -- than the case being reflected by the authors of National Intelligence Estimate 11-3/8-76, "Soviet Forces for Inter-continental Conflict."

Members of the "B" teams were recruited from among senior political and military analysts experienced in Soviet affairs, based on the guidance of the Estimates Evaluation Committee of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

We believe that purposes such as these, aimed at seeking new ways of improving the analytic process and thus the intelligence which is provided to the national leadership, are important. Should it become necessary to publicly explain, in our view the true facts will commend you and the intelligence community to the American people for the integrity and objectivity of this unique effort.

Sincerely,


Leo Cherne
Chairman

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Routing Slip

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TO:

		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		X		
2	DDCI		X		
3	D/DCI/IC		X		
4	DDS&T				
5	DDI				
6	DDA				
7	DDO				
8	D/DCI/NI	X			
9	GC				
10	LC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/Pers				
14	D/S				
15	DTR				
16	Asst/DCI		X		
17	AO/DCI				
18	C/IPS				
19	DCI/SS				
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SUSPENSE _____
Date _____

Remarks:

B. C. Evans
Executive Secretary